

Evidence-Based Resources Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

[Star Ratings](#)

[Selection Criteria](#)

[Resource Definitions](#)

[Leading Health Indicators](#)

[Search Tips](#)

[Current and Future-Based Resources Content](#)

★★★★ Star Ratings

1. What do the star ratings mean for each evidence-based resource?

★★★★ Stars

Evidence-based resources with this rating are based on rigorous evidence, including systematic reviews of published intervention evaluations or studies that have evidence of effectiveness, feasibility, reach, sustainability, and transferability.

Examples: Recommendations of the Community Preventive Services Task Force, recommendations of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, and systematic reviews published in peer-reviewed journals

★★★ Stars

Evidence-based resources with this rating are based on strong evidence, including non-systematic reviews of published intervention evaluations or studies that have evidence of effectiveness, feasibility, reach, sustainability, and transferability.

Examples: Non-systematic reviews published by the Federal Government or in peer-reviewed journals

★★ Stars

Evidence-based resources with this rating are based on moderate evidence, including intervention evaluations or studies with peer review that have evidence of effectiveness, feasibility, reach, sustainability, and transferability.

Examples: Journal articles of individual studies, published intervention research, and published pilot studies

★ Star

Evidence-based resources with this rating are based on weak evidence, including intervention evaluations or studies without peer review that have evidence of effectiveness, feasibility, reach, sustainability, and transferability.

Examples: Unpublished intervention research, unpublished pilot studies, unpublished case studies, and unpublished field-based summaries

2. What are the differences between the ratings?

4 Stars vs. 3 Stars: A 4 star rating requires a formal, comprehensive, and systematic review of all relevant literature whereas a 3 star rating only requires an informal, non-comprehensive, non-systematic review of some but not all relevant literature.

3 Stars vs. 2 Stars: A 3 star rating requires a review of multiple evaluations or studies whereas a 2 star rating only requires one evaluation or study.

2 Stars vs. 1 Star: A 2 star rating requires peer review whereas a 1 star rating does not require peer review.

3. How were these ratings developed?

These ratings were developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Best Practices Workgroup, revised by the Healthy People 2020 Implementation Strategies Subgroup, and approved by the Healthy People 2020 Federal Interagency Workgroup for the purpose of identifying evidence-based resources and interventions that may be used to implement the disease prevention and health promotion objectives and achieve targets set forth in Healthy People 2020.

Selection Criteria

4. What are the limits of the criteria used to identify the Healthy People 2020 evidence-based resources?

Each of the selected evidence-based resources has been rated and classified according to [selection criteria](#) based, in part, on whether: it is a formal, comprehensive, systematic review; it was peer reviewed and published; and it includes multiple evaluations or studies. This classification scheme does not necessarily consider all dimensions of quality such as statistical significance, effect size (e.g., magnitude of effect), meaningfulness of effect, additional effect over control, and study design (e.g., sample size, power, internal validity, external validity, generalizability, potential biases, and potential confounders).

5. How were these evidence-based resources identified?

These evidence-based resources were identified by subject matter experts at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services who comprise the *Healthy People 2020* Workgroup Coordinators for the relevant *Healthy People 2020* Topic Area. The list of *Healthy People* Topic Areas can be found [here](#). Information about *Healthy People 2020* Workgroups is described [here](#). The list of *Healthy People* Workgroup Coordinators can be found [here](#).

Resource Definitions

6. Can you define the types of resources displayed?

Systematic Review: A systematic review is a critical assessment and evaluation of all research studies that address a particular issue. Researchers use an organized method of locating, assembling, and evaluating a body of literature on a particular topic using a set of specific criteria. A systematic review typically includes a description of the findings of the collection of research studies. The systematic review may or may not include a quantitative pooling of data, called a meta-analysis.

Non-Systematic Review: A non-systematic review is a critical assessment and evaluation of some but not all research studies that address a particular issue. Researchers do not use an organized method of locating, assembling, and evaluating a body of literature on a particular topic, possibly using a set of specific criteria. A non-systematic review typically includes a description of the findings of the collection of research studies. The non-systematic review may or may not include a quantitative pooling of data, called a meta-analysis.

Randomized Control Trial: A randomized control trial is a controlled clinical trial that randomly (by chance) assigns participants to two or more groups. There are various methods to randomize study participants to their groups.

Cohort Study: A cohort study is a clinical research study in which people who presently have a certain condition or receive a particular treatment are followed over time and compared with another group of people who are not affected by the condition.

Cross-Sectional or Prevalence Study: A cross-sectional or prevalence study is a study that examines how often or how frequently a disease or condition occurs in a group of people. Prevalence is calculated by dividing the number of people who have the disease or condition by the total number of people in the group.

Case-Control Study: A case-control study identifies all incident cases that develop the outcome of interest and compares their exposure history with the exposure history of controls sampled at random from everyone within the cohort who is still at risk for developing the outcome of interest.

Expert Opinion: The opinion of someone widely recognized as a reliable source of knowledge, technique, or skill whose faculty for judging or deciding rightly, justly, or wisely is accorded authority and status by their peers or the public in a specific well-distinguished domain.

Pilot Study: A pilot study is a small-scale experiment or set of observations undertaken to decide how and whether to launch a full-scale project.

Experimental Study: An experimental study is a type of evaluation that seeks to determine whether a program or intervention had the intended causal effect on program participants.

Peer-Reviewed: A publication that contains original articles that have been written by scientists and evaluated for technical and scientific quality and correctness by other experts in the same field.

Leading Health Indicators

7. What are the Leading Health Indicators?

Healthy People 2020 provides a comprehensive set of 10-year national goals and objectives for improving the health of all Americans. Healthy People 2020 is composed of more than 1,200 objectives across 42 Topic Areas. A smaller set of Healthy People 2020 objectives, called Leading Health Indicators, has been selected to communicate high-priority health issues and actions that can be taken to address them. The 12 Leading Health Indicator topics are:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1. Access to Health Services | 7. Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity |
| 2. Clinical Preventive Services | 8. Oral Health |
| 3. Environmental Quality | 9. Reproductive and Sexual Health |
| 4. Injury and Violence | 10. Social Determinants |
| 5. Maternal, Infant, and Child Health | 11. Substance Abuse |
| 6. Mental Health | 12. Tobacco |

For more information, visit: <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/LHI/default.aspx>

Search Tips

8. What are some search tips for using the evidence-based resources tool?

- The shading of the check boxes will enable you to see what criteria can be searched. You might want to begin with a broad search first. You can visually screen and link to the specific types of resources currently available.
- Be sure to reset the search form before starting a new search. Links are provided at both the beginning and end of the form.
- When filling out your search, be sure to scroll through all the choices before clicking on the Search button.
- Be aware that full documents available through the search links can be large and may take some time to access and download. Some publishers may charge a fee.
- A quick way to change your search by type of resource is to stay on the results page and use the dropdown menu. Your search results will be filtered accordingly.

Current and Future Evidence-Based Resources Content

9. Why am I unable to search the database for some Topic Areas and objectives and for various other categories of information?

Topic Areas and objectives are dimmed in the dropdown menus to indicate that the lack of resources available in the database for at the time of your search. The same is true for specific search criteria, such as age ranges. We are continually adding evidence-based resources to the database. As resources become available, you will have the opportunity to choose from more Topic Areas, objectives, and search criteria.

10. Who developed this evidence-based resource tool?

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion developed this tool with guidance from the Healthy People 2020 Federal Interagency Workgroup (FIW) and the FIW's Implementation Strategies Subgroup, input from the Healthy People 2020 Workgroup Coordinators, and support from the National Institutes of Health's Office of Disease Prevention.